

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. at the National Center for Women Development. In his remarks, he referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo and Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development Hajia Aisha Ismail of Nigeria; Timiebi Koripano-Agary, director general, and Tayo Akimuwagun, peer educator, National Center for Women Development; and Richard T. Schlosberg III, president, David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Remarks to Business Leaders in Abuja

August 27, 2000

Thank you. Thank you very, very much. I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Mr. Moorman and Mr. Ndanusa and Reverend Jackson for their remarks. I want to thank the First Lady of Nigeria for joining us today. Thank you very much. I thank the members of the American delegation who have joined me from the United States Congress, from local government, the leaders of our Export-Import Bank and our AID operations, and many others. They're all over here to my right, and they are a part of what we are trying to do. And I thank the members of the Nigerian and American business communities for being here.

As is usually the case when I get up to speak, everything which needs to be said today has already been said by the previous speakers—[laughter]—and I might add, said very well. I would just like to talk a moment about the American response and what I hope will be the Nigerian response.

After working so long to restore democracy and, in a way, to genuinely have it for the first time, there must be a dividend to democracy for the people of Nigeria. Now, what will the role of trade and investment be in that dividend? What will the role of the explosion in information technology be and communications on the Internet be? How will this totally new world change what Nigeria has been through in the last 30 to 40 years? And what things depend entirely on what the Nigerian people and business leaders decide to do themselves?

From the 1970's to the 1990's, developing countries that chose growth through trade grew at least twice as fast as those that were

not open to the world. Nonetheless, there are clearly new challenges. What does all this mean for you? That is what I would like to talk very briefly about—first, what you have to do; secondly, what we have to do.

It really is a very different world now. For more than 100 years, we've been moving toward more global trade, but the information revolution has changed everything. In 1993, in January, when I became the President of the United States, there were, in total in the whole world, only 50—50—sites on the World Wide Web. Today, there are 20 million or so and rising—in 7½ years.

Even when we were having increases in trade, they were due largely to old, traditional sorts of things. You had oil; somebody else needed oil and didn't have it, so you would take it out of the ground and sell it to them, and they would send you the money. And the geographic facts dictated that. Or, you made beautiful cloth or pottery, and you sold it to somebody near you who made something else, and they sold that to you.

Now, if you have ideas and imagination, the information technology has virtually collapsed the meaning of distance, and it's made the human mind and ideas even more important than riches in the ground. So what does that mean? What does it mean for you? What does it mean for us?

Well, first of all, government policy still matters. So your government, any government of any nation that wants to grow wealthier, has to have the basics right—managing the economy well, keeping the markets open, establishing the rule of law, creating a good climate for investment—Reverend Jackson talked about that; President Obasanjo knows all that.

Look at the record. Nigeria has turned a fiscal deficit into a surplus. Its growth is up, and it is moving to cut tariffs. I also hope it will follow through with planned economic reforms, including some privatization that will encourage some investment from abroad and at home, and improve services for Nigerian citizens.

Now, if Nigeria does its part, then Nigeria's trading partners and the wealthier countries of the world, especially, must do their part, as well. You are America's important

partner, and we are your largest trading partner. So we have a special responsibility to act. I'm glad to announce today that we are making your exports eligible for duty-free treatment under our GSP program. *[Applause]* Thank you. Now, what does this mean?

Let me say something about this. I want all of you to—in spite of the fact that nearly everything has been said that needs to be said, here's one thing that hasn't been said. Along with the political tragedy of the last 20 years, you have had a colossal economic tragedy. You pumped a lot of oil out of the ground, got a lot of money for it, and somebody besides the people got the benefit of it. But let me just say this—looking forward, that's only one part of the tragedy. That's the real significance of what I said about duty-free treatment. In other words, if no one had stolen any money, if no one had kept too much to himself, you could still be in trouble if you didn't use the oil money to get into some business other than oil. That's the main point I want to make to you.

So it's important—yes, I know you have to look at the past and you have to have accountability and all that. But let's not get too carried away about the impact of the past on the future. You have got to not only make sure that the money coming from the oil benefits the people; you've got to invest some of that money in a way that broadens the nature of the Nigerian economy if you really want people to get richer.

You've got to rebuild the agricultural sector. You've got to broaden the manufacturing sector. You can actually have dot-com companies in Nigeria. You can make money off the Internet here, just like people do everywhere. And there needs to be a lot of thought given to how you're going to diversify the economy. I hope the fact that you can sell us things now without paying imports will make it more competitive and that we can help.

Our Export-Import Bank—and I mentioned Mr. Harmon earlier, who's here—is signing—listen to this—\$1.2 billion in loan guarantees today. Our Trade and Development Agency is beginning a feasibility study that could generate projects worth hundreds of millions more.

We also signed the Africa growth and opportunity bill earlier, and every Member of Congress over here voted for it, and I'm grateful to them for doing that. That will provide even broader benefits than our GSP program for countries that are eligible. When we fully implement the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, Africa will have the most liberal access to America's market of any region in the world outside North America. I am very, very proud of that.

Now, so I will say again, we're committed to doing our part. But we have to reverse the practice that went along with the absence of democracy, not only because a lot of the oil money went to the wrong hands, but it wasn't reinvested. You could go around and just hand money out to everybody in Nigeria and be just as fair and equal as possible, and it still would all be gone in a month or two. We have got to diversify this economy.

Now, what does that mean? It means, among other things, you have to rebuild your infrastructure as well as a lot of your basic industries. Half of the people don't have access to clean water. It means that you have to broaden access to education; your school enrollment levels need to be made more nearly universal. It means you have to dramatically broaden access to information technology; only 9,000 people have direct access to the Internet.

Let me tell you a story. I was in India, where the per capita income is not much higher than Nigeria, in one of the poorest states in the entire nation, in a little village not so very different from the lovely little village I visited here this morning. *[Laughter]* You know? And the ladies of the village were in their Indian costumes, and they were very beautiful, and they danced. The only difference was, there they threw petals of flowers all over me, and they buried me in a mound of flowers. It was nice. *[Laughter]*

But anyway, I went in to meet with the local government, and I was stunned. In this very old building that was not in very good repair, I was stunned to see this brand new computer. And I met a lady who lived in the village who had been trained to use the computer. And I saw a young mother come in and get on the computer, and she dialed in

the information for the nation's health department. And up it came, in two languages, Hindi and English, with pictures of what young mothers should do to care properly for their babies for the first 6 months. It was just as good as anything the wealthiest woman in Washington, DC, could get from the most expensive doctor. And she punched a little button, and the printer printed it out, and she took the information home. And because there were so many pictures, even if you couldn't read very well, you could understand what you were supposed to do.

I went to another state in India, and every citizen could get a license for a car or any other kind of government permit over the Internet at common stations in all their cities, so that people learn to use the Internet who never would have learned to use it before just so they didn't have to go stand in line at a government office.

The point I'm trying to make here is, it's not true that poor people in poor countries can't make their lives better or make more money out of information technology or can't have access to better education. It is not true. You should look at this as an opportunity to move faster by maybe 10, 20, 30 years than you could have moved otherwise with your economic development. But you've got to spread it out. You've got to do what is now called—you have to bridge the digital divide. And we have to help you do that.

Now, I agree that we should help you with the debt burden, as long as you are going to spend the savings of the debt burden on the real human and economic long-term needs of the people of Nigeria. So, after all—and I think Nigeria has a compelling case because it was a very different government that ran up those debts, with very different priorities, so I think you've got a compelling case. But again, debt relief is just like oil money. You think about it. You could take it and go give it out to everybody, and in 2 or 3 months it would all be gone. *[Laughter]*

Your President has promised the whole world, as well as the people of Nigeria, he's going to stay on the path of economic reform. And if that happens, I believe that we will be able to persuade our partners among the other wealthy nations that we ought to move

more aggressively to help alleviate Nigeria's debt service programs. I believe that. *[Applause]*

You don't have to clap for me. I'm not running for anything anymore. I'm not a candidate. You can totally ignore me. *[Laughter]* But keep in mind, if we take the burden off the government of having to make these debt service payments, then you must support the President and you must support your legislators, anybody with any influence over how this is done, to spend the money in a way that will grow the economy and strengthen the society of Nigeria over the long run.

It is not—yes, everything must be honest and fair, but it's not just a question of being honest and fair. It's also a question of being smart about how this money is invested so that you are growing the economy over the long run in ways that benefit all the people. We have got to broaden the base of this economy.

Now, it has to be done. And you have got to support your President. And you have to be willing, as business people, to stand up and say when somebody says, "Well, why are we spending this on health care? Why are we spending this on education? Why are we spending this on clean water? Why are we spending this on a road in another part of the country?"—I'll hear that; I know about that—*[laughter]*—"Why are we building those roads in the other part of the country," all this stuff—the only test you should have is, if they do this, are we going to have healthier children, better educated young people, and a stronger economy and a better prospect for a more diverse economy over the future? That should be your test. And if the answer to those questions is, yes, you should support it.

So we have to do that. We also have to work together to keep infectious diseases from taking away your democratic dreams and your dreams of recovery. We just did an event on this whole issue, but one in four people in the world today who die every year, die from infectious diseases, in spite of all the advances in medicine. An enormous percentage of these people are under 5 years of age. AIDS threatens to lower the life expectancy of some African countries by 20 to

30 years. There will be countries on this continent within a few years who will have more people in their sixties than people in their thirties.

Now, you're going to have a million people die this year of malaria. Most of them could be saved by being less careless, taking precautions. And AIDS is 100 percent preventable.

Yes, we are spending a lot of money now, and I'm very proud of my Congress, the Republicans and the Democrats in our Congress, for voting to put the United States in the lead of developing a global effort for an AIDS vaccine, because that's the ultimate answer. And we're going to spend a lot of money on that. I think we should spend more money to give you the drugs that are available today at more affordable prices, and I'm trying to raise a lot of money from drug companies and others, and I'm trying to get the Congress to give the drug companies in our country a tax cut to make more of these drugs available to you at a lower cost. We're trying to do that.

But we have got to have your help in prevention. Nobody has to get AIDS. But it's difficult, painful—as I said at the other meeting—it's slightly embarrassing, even, to have to talk about how you get the disease and how you stop it. But it's not nearly as painful as watching another child die who doesn't have to die. And I applaud the fact that your President and your Government are trying to get ahead of this.

Yes, there are 3 million Nigerians who have HIV or AIDS, and that's a terrible number, but it's nothing compared to the consuming numbers that are gripping other countries. And the fact that you are doing so much in an aggressive way on prevention is something that I hope everyone in this room will strongly support the President on and strongly keep working for, because otherwise, it can take away all these economic things that we're doing, and you have to be very serious about it.

We need to work to invest more in education. We are helping to establish some community resource centers in every region of Nigeria that will provide Internet access and training to students and teachers and small businesses, so that we can have more

Nigerians gain access to information technology. And we will try to do more, too.

But you should try to think about anyone in the world you can ask to help you do more. You can't do what you want to do with this economy quickly with only 9,000 people with Internet access. You need 9 million people with Internet access, and you can do it in no time, and we'll help you. But you all should understand, it collapses time and distance; that's what the Internet does. And you need someone to help you collapse time and distance.

Finally, one other issue here that I wanted to mention. You don't have enough people in school. And one of the things we're trying to do—I've put up \$300 million, and I'm going around the world pleading with other rich countries to give us some money, to offer a worldwide program to any country who will take us up on it—and President Obasanjo said he's very interested—to provide one nutritious meal a day in school for every child that will show up for school.

Now, I'm convinced if we did that, we would dramatically increase school enrollment among girls as well as boys, where it's very, very important. We don't want to upset local agricultural economies; we have to work with them. We know we have delivery difficulties. This is not a miracle program, but we are committed to it. And I'm grateful that the President said he was interested in having a pilot program here. But again I will say, I think you've got a big interest in getting all your children in school. And it will pay rich dividends for your economy, as well as having fewer social problems, fewer public health problems.

Now, the last thing I will say is that it really is important that there be an alliance between the Government and the people of Nigeria and the business interests that are investing in Nigeria, including those that are from other countries. I want more American investment in Nigeria—let me just say this—but I want it to be good old-fashioned, honest investment that benefits everybody who's willing to work for a living. And I want us to be good partners to this good new democracy you have.

I think the American companies will do that. We are creating a new position in our

Embassy to work with the Nigerian Government, with the oil companies, with local communities to promote democratic and economic development in the Niger Delta. I think that's good.

This September the United Nations Foundation and several oil companies are going to launch the New Nigeria Foundation, to be administered jointly by the U.N. Development Programme and the U.S. organization Citizens International to help Nigeria create jobs by diversifying the economy, providing health care, fighting illiteracy, supporting small business. It's the first public/private partnership of its kind within the United Nations system dedicated to the well-being now of Nigeria's people. And I thank the U.N. and the oil companies that are funding it. This is a very, very important step.

I will just close with this point—and I want to thank all the Americans who are here and those who have been doing business here a long time and those who are thinking about investing here. The President and the First Lady and my daughter and I and Reverend Jackson, a lot of the Americans, went to church this morning at the First Baptist Church here. And the minister gave a good sermon, even for people who aren't Christians. He talked about the story in the Christian New Testament of the Good Samaritan. And many of you maybe know the story, but basically, there's a poor guy that gets beaten up and robbed on the side of the road and left for dead. And a priest of the church then, in Judea and Samaria, sees him and averts his eyes and walks on. And then a man from a very prominent tribe sees him and diverts his eyes and he walks on.

And then the Samaritan, who came from a sort of outcast people, people who were looked down on, thought to be alien and not friendly to the dominant peoples of the area, he saw him, went over to him, ministered to his wounds, made him better, took him to a local inn, asked the innkeeper to take the man in, paid money out of his own pocket, and said, "I want you to let him stay here until he's well enough to go, and the next time I'm through town, if I owe you more money, I'll pay you." Quite a wonderful story.

Now, here's what the preacher said. I mean, what's this got to do with you, you're

asking. I'm getting to that. [*Laughter*] So the minister says, "Now, there are three kinds of people in this story. The first kind says, 'Whatever is yours is mine if I can take it away from you.' That's the person that beat up the poor man. The second kind of person says, 'Whatever is mine is mine if I can just keep it.' That's the priest and the man from the fancy tribe who turned their eyes away and walked away. And the third kind of person says, 'Whatever is mine is yours if you need it.' That was the Samaritan."

Now, the point I want to make to you is, from a religious point of view, whatever your faith, the third kind of person is the only sort of person worth being. But from a political and economic point of view, there's a fourth sort of person I want you to be. [*Laughter*] I want you to think about this.

We live in a world which is overwhelmingly more interdependent. A bunch of people in Nigeria get malaria, and they have to travel for a living—they're going to give it to Americans in airports. Think about it. People are now giving people AIDS all over the world. And yet good things are happening, too, in partnerships all over the world.

Therefore, if I want every child in America to have a future 20, 30, 40 years from now, that will be as bright as possible, I should do something to help every child in Nigeria have a future that is as bright as possible, because it's actually good for the American kids. If you have more people making more money by selling products to Americans, it's good for us because then we'll be able to sell you some things.

So the Good Samaritan story is right for another reason. It's not just whatever is mine is yours if you need it, but if I give you a little of mine now, I'll get it back many times over—[*laughter*]—because this old world is like a boat in a sea, and sometimes the sea is stormy, and sometimes the sea is calm; sometimes the winds blow with us, and sometimes the winds blow against us; sometimes one of us is the captain of the ship, and then three or four decades later somebody else may be the captain of the ship. You can say all of that, but when it's all said and done, no matter what, we're all still in the same boat.

I believe that. That's really why I'm here. And that's why I want you to support the President, to support economic reform. I want the Americans to put more money in here. But I hope you will remember what I said.

Fairness is important, and honesty's important. But you have a country to rebuild here. So it's also important that you do the intelligent thing, and that we think about the Good Samaritan and realize that in the end, the Good Samaritan was better off. He got a lot more out of life than the priest and the other guy that walked by. Why? Because in the end, we're all in the same boat. So let's sail.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and his wife, Stella; Edward L. Moorman, director general, General Motors Nigeria Limited; Alhaji U. Ndanusa, president, Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture; U.S. Special Envoy to Africa Rev. Jesse Jackson; and Iraael Ikanji, minister, First Baptist Church in Abuja.

Statement on the United Airlines Labor Agreement

August 27, 2000

I am pleased that United Airlines and its pilots have reached an agreement at the bargaining table. I commend union and management for working together to resolve their differences in a way that will benefit the traveling public. I am also encouraged that over the last week the aviation industry met with Secretary Slater and pledged to work with my administration to address the service related issues and the long-term outlook for quality customer service.

Statement on the National Crime Victimization Survey

August 27, 2000

Today the Department of Justice released the 1999 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) which shows that last year the Nation's violent crime rate experienced the

single largest one-year drop in the survey's history and is at its lowest level in over 25 years. This news is further proof that the Clinton-Gore administration's anticrime strategy of more police on our streets and fewer guns in the wrong hands has helped to create the safest America in a generation. Since the Vice President and I took office in 1993, every major category of violent and property crime has decreased significantly according to today's NCVS, with the overall violent crime rate down by one-third and the rates for rape and robberies and assaults with injuries down by more than one-third.

Despite our extraordinary progress, we can and must make America even safer. Every year our Nation loses nearly 30,000 Americans—including 10 children every day—to gun violence. That is why I call on Congress to continue our success by funding our administration's proposals to put up to an additional 50,000 community police officers on the street and hire 1,000 new Federal, State, and local gun prosecutors and 500 ATF firearms agents and inspectors to crack down on gun criminals. Congress also must make passage of the long-stalled commonsense gun safety legislation a top priority as our children prepare to return to school. Together, we can continue to drive down the Nation's crime rates and improve the quality of life for American families for generations to come.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 25 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m., August 27.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Further Deployment of United States Forces to East Timor

August 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On October 8, 1999, I reported to the Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, the deployment of a limited number of U.S. military forces to provide support to the International Force East Timor (INTERFET). This multinational force, established by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1264, was given a mandate to restore peace and security in East